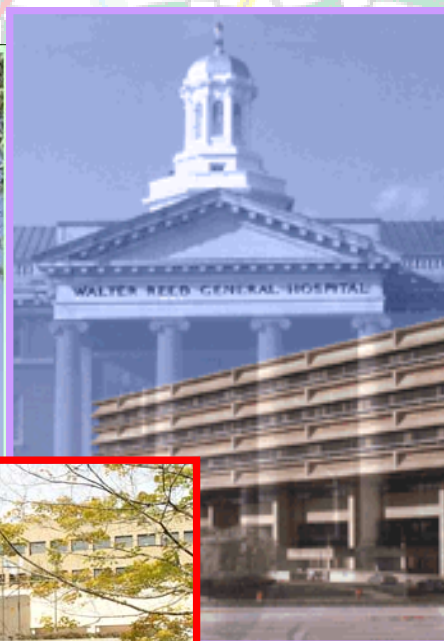


BRAC AND INTEGRATION



NATIONAL CAPITAL AREA 2006 - 2007



BRAC comes to Washington, D.C.

On May 13, 2005, the Department of Defense announced its recommendations for the latest round of Base Realignments and Closures. Significant changes were suggested for military medicine in the Washington, D.C. area. These changes were reviewed, discussed, and ultimately approved by Congress and the President in November 2005. Changes are to be implemented by September 2011.

The most visible change will be in the number of inpatient medical facilities in the area. There are four currently in use – National Naval Medical Center in Bethesda, Maryland; Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington, D.C.; Malcolm Grow Medical Center at Andrews Air Force Base in Maryland; and DeWitt Army Community Hospital at Fort Belvoir in Northern Virginia.

These facilities will merge into two hospitals, both staffed by Army, Navy and Air Force personnel.

- National Naval and Walter Reed will become the new Walter Reed National Military Medical Center on the Bethesda campus.
- Malcolm Grow will do outpatient care only at its current location.
- DeWitt will be enlarged on Fort Belvoir, and many Walter Reed clinical services will open there.
- Research, education, and training will be centered on the Bethesda campus with students rotating at DeWitt as the major satellite teaching hospital and at Malcolm Grow for outpatient experience.
- The post in the District, known as Walter Reed Army Medical Center Installation, will close when all components have moved in September 2011.

Other changes include:

- Armed Forces Medical Examiner, DNA Registry, and Accident Investigation will relocate to Dover Air Force Base, Delaware.
- Enlisted histology technician training will relocate to Fort



Sam Houston, Texas.

- Combat Casualty Care Research at the Walter Reed Army Institute of Research and the Naval Medical Research Center will move to Fort Sam Houston, Texas.
- Medical Biological Defense Research now at Walter Reed Army Institute of Research and Naval Medical Research

Center will consolidate with the US Army Medical Research Institute of Infectious Diseases at Fort Detrick, Maryland.

- Medical Chemical Defense Research at the Walter Reed Army Institute of Research will consolidate with the US Army Medical Research Institute of Chemical Defense at Aberdeen Proving Ground.

One Integrated World-Class Healthcare System

The Washington, D.C. area is transforming its military treatment facilities into an integrated top quality healthcare system. Integration and inter-operability are the key words!

Leadership envisions a tri-service world-wide military referral center at the new national medical center in Bethesda to open in 2011 when National Naval Medical Center and Walter Reed Army Medical Center merge. With the other military treatment facilities in the area, the medical center will serve as a premier academic medical system focused on delivering the highest quality care, distinguished health professional education, and exemplary clinical and transnational research.

BRAC 2005 has set an end date to the transformation, but movement towards integration started over ten years ago. Integration is vital to resource management due to budget and staff concerns. Moreover, integration makes sense in the Washington area where all military services maintain treatment facilities, and each facility takes care of beneficiaries who live nearby no matter what their service affiliation.

Starting in the mid-1990s with the develop-

ment of the National Capital Consortium for training military doctors, nurses, and technicians, the three medical centers – National Naval, Walter Reed, and Malcolm Grow -- began slowly to combine their strengths and assets. Now, these efforts will increase and adhere to a strict timeline imposed by BRAC.

In addition, DeWitt Army Community Hospital will be enlarged to better serve the growing population of military families in Northern Virginia, and many Walter Reed medical services will open clinics there. Interns, residents, and fellows from all service affiliations will rotate at DeWitt, and permanent staff will include Navy and Air Force clinical personnel.

The Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences already located on Bethesda's campus is another important new player in the intensified integration efforts. Graduate medical education and research will be centrally managed at the university, and will greatly benefit from "the best of the best" in Army, Navy and Air Force medical training programs, as well as from proximity to the National Institutes of Health located just across the street.



Photo by Thomas Balfour, Uniformed Services University

Plans for integrating military healthcare in the Washington, D.C. area are moving swiftly forward. Prior to BRAC 2005, integration had already taken place in Graduate Medical Education, and there was tri-service staffing in many clinics, especially at National Naval Medical Center, Malcolm Grow Medical Center, and Walter Reed Army Medical Center. Now a merger is planned for Walter Reed with National Naval, and Malcolm Grow will become an outpatient care center. The medical center commanders are shown above at an August 2006 meeting with Dr. Charles L. Rice, President of the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences. From left to right, Dr. Rice; Maj. Gen. Kenneth L. Farmer Jr., Walter Reed; Rear Adm. Adam Robinson Jr., National Naval; and Brig. Gen. Thomas W. Travis, 79th Medical Wing Commander at Malcolm Grow.

Q: How does Integration affect me NOW?

A: No Clinic Relocations yet!

A lot is happening with integration efforts, but patients may not notice because it is mostly behind-the-scenes planning. If you look around the next time you are at Walter Reed Army Medical Center, National Naval Medical Center or Malcolm Grow Medical Center, you may notice an increase in the diversity of uniforms. Integration of services.... These are the key words and actions.

Important to you, the patients, is that there are no changes in clinic locations at this time. Walter Reed is open at its same Georgia Avenue Northwest location, and for the time being will remain fully operational for outpatient and inpatient care. The same goes for National Naval in Bethesda and Malcolm Grow and DeWitt at their locations. See pages 6 and 7 for addresses and appointment center phone numbers.

Enrollment into TRICARE Prime continues without change. Patients enrolled to Walter Reed still report to Walter Reed as usual to see their Primary Care Managers. Patients enrolled to National Naval go there, and those enrolled to Malcolm Grow go there for primary care. Patients referred for specialty care from other Washington area clinics

are appointed to any one of the three medical centers with available times. Inpatient care also continues at all three medical centers.

Non-Prime beneficiaries may seek space available care in any area facility. Specialty clinics at the medical centers want to fill all their appointment slots, so always call for a military appointment before you turn to civilian providers.

What's going on that you don't see? Planning meetings and much, much more. Five years is not much time to design and implement the changes needed at National Naval, Malcolm Grow and DeWitt for clinics and services to merge. Funds have been approved, but the process of architectural design, building and moving in stages to new spaces will take a huge amount of planning and organizational strategy.

To give you an idea of the work that's gone on so far, here's a partial list of what has been accomplished as of September 2006:

- Office of Integration set up to oversee planning
- Integration Steering Committee established and working
- Eight functional area subcommittees established and working
- Space planning proposed

- Goals set and timelines established
- Budget needs determined and requested – and approved!
- One Integrated Business Plan written, submitted – and approved!
- Regular ongoing meetings of involved Command Flag officers
- Two area-wide integration "change leaders" conferences convened

To keep updated on these and other Integration developments as they evolve, check the Office of Integration website at www.bethesda.med.navy.mil. Also, become a regular reader of your installation newspaper. When you see this sign



you'll know there's news about the integration efforts.



Photo by Bobbi Jones

LCDR Erin Balog and Major Christopher Kieling consult on a patient case.



Photo by Bobbi Jones

Captain Jeffrey Livezey examines a young patient in the Pediatrics Clinic at National Naval Medical Center.

Our Doors on Georgia Ave may close in 2011, but Business Goes on as Usual

Guess what? Walter Reed is hiring civilians. Right now. Even though the hospital will be changing locations in 2011, jobs are still becoming available. If you are a retiree, a family member, a medical professional or an interested civilian who wants to work in a clinic or hospital setting, do not hesitate to contact the personnel office at Walter Reed to see what jobs are open.

Check www.wramc.army.mil (see Job Opportunities on the main portal page) for weekly updates.

This BRAC/Integration and TRICARE 2006-2007 informational supplement to your Command newspaper was developed, written, and edited by members of the Integration Communications Committee, Office of Integration, and Communications Advisory Committee to the Multi-Service Market Office, TRICARE Region North.

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The information in this supplement was current at the time of publication, is not all-inclusive and is intended as educational in nature. Up to date information about Integration is available at www.bethesda.med.navy.mil. Information on TRICARE benefits is available at www.tricare.osd.mil or at your nearest TRICARE Service Center. Advertisements contained in the supplement are contributed by local healthcare providers and should not be viewed as an endorsement by the Office of Integration or TRICARE.

Update: Integration Facts

August 2006

- An Office of Integration now oversees changes coming to military medicine in the Washington, D.C. area.
- Right now, there are NO CHANGES in how or where you receive care. Your primary care clinic and your primary care provider are in the same locations they always were.
- Currently, Walter Reed Army Medical Center and National Naval Medical Center are involved in joint staff meetings. We are coordinating future budget decisions and discussing the merging of clinics and departments.
- One goal of these discussions is that specialty services become merged long before Walter Reed and National Naval physically merge. By the time this happens in 2011, the two facilities will already be one integrated family.
- Today, when you receive care in the National Capital Area you are likely to see Army doctors working at National Naval, Navy doctors working at Walter Reed, and Air Force doctors working at both facilities.
- Future plans also call for an enlarged DeWitt Army Community Hospital at Fort Belvoir to serve the military community in Northern Virginia. Many specialty services will open clinics there. This larger hospital will be a training hospital working closely with the new Bethesda medical center. Staff at both facilities will be tri-service.
- The Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences is part of integration, too. It is already located on the Bethesda campus, and will centrally manage military medical education and research programs at the new medical center, at DeWitt and Malcolm Grow, and elsewhere.
- Funding for construction as well as an area-wide business plan have been approved. The many steps in the integration process that still lie ahead include environmental impact studies, the drawing up of architectural designs, and, finally, the beginning of construction.

Integration of Medical Services Makes Sense

It may have come as a surprise to many when the news broke that Walter Reed installation would close and an enlarged medical environment would be built on the National Naval Medical Center campus and at DeWitt Army Community Hospital. There were, however, sound reasons for the proposed changes. Closing the Walter Reed installation makes sense, and when done right – and all the planners are trying to assure that it will be done right, merging medical centers and enlarging Fort Belvoir’s community hospital will have distinct advantages.

The changes will:
End Duplication of Services. Walter Reed and National Naval are only 6.5 miles from each other and the two hospitals separately duplicate many services. Integration will consolidate these services at a long-term cost savings with almost no difference in drive time for patients.

Modernize and Expand. The Walter

Reed building is aging, and would be cost prohibitive to rebuild, whereas the Bethesda campus offers room for expansion on its 243-acre site, and DeWitt is also on a large post with room to build. Expansion means new construction and modernized facilities.

Better Serve Beneficiaries Where They Live. While most specialty clinics from Walter Reed will move to the National Naval campus in Bethesda, many services will open clinics at the enlarged DeWitt facility in Northern Virginia. More beneficiaries live in Maryland and Northern Virginia than in the District. Appropriately-sized facilities will now serve these populations.

In addition, outpatient care and same-day-surgery centers will be located at Malcolm Grow at Andrews Air Force Base and at Kimbrough Ambulatory Care Center at Fort Meade to serve beneficiaries east and north of the city.

Effectively Position Graduate Education and Research. Merging

National Naval and Walter Reed will leverage graduate education and the training capabilities of the Uniformed Services University on the same campus, and help maximize research opportunities with the National Institutes of Health just across the street. The merger will offer a unique government platform for healthcare, education, and research.

Improve Commuting and Parking. The Bethesda campus is already a stop on the Metro Redline, and patients may choose (when possible) to use public transportation to avoid the hassle of commuting and parking. Staff, too, will be able to come to work by Metro and thus free up parking for patients. Patients who have searched for parking at either Walter Reed or National Naval at their current separate locations know there is a need for more parking accommodation. More parking will be created at the new facility in Bethesda as well as at DeWitt to match the expansion planned for that facility.

The Office of Integration

The Office of Integration was established in December of 2005. It is headed by two senior active-duty officer-executives, one from National Naval Medical Center and one from Walter Reed Army Medical Center. The primary mission is to oversee the merging of Walter Reed and National Naval into the Walter Reed National Military Medical Center at Bethesda.

As of August 2006, the Office had grown to ten people from the original two. Staff is busy coordinating recommendations from a network of groups working on the integration process. These working groups are made up of more than 1200 staff members who represent coworkers and beneficiaries within the military medical family of the Washington area.

While the merger of National Naval and Walter Reed is a large piece of integration in the area, it is not the only piece.

Ultimately integration will impact all local military treatment facilities. The Office of Integration works closely with all facility commanders as discussions go forward on space requirements, manpower projections, and equipment needs.

The Office is committed to keeping beneficiaries informed, and has created a public website with progress updates. Visitors to the site may ask questions or provide feedback in an open comment section. You may access the site at www.bethesda.med.navy.mil.

The triangular logo you see here identifies information from the Office of Integration. Look for this image in your installation newspapers, on military public web sites, and on signage. When you see it, you will know there is an update on the integration process that may affect you and your medical services.



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Local Graduate Medical Education is Alive and Well

Graduate Medical Education in the National Capital Consortium at Walter Reed Army Medical Center, National Naval Medical Center, Malcolm Grow Medical Center and DeWitt Army Community Hospital is alive and well. There are no plans to close any of the 65 physician training programs in the Consortium, and with Medical Center realignment, residencies and fellowships are expected to be as robust as ever.

It is anticipated that the large new facility at Fort Belvoir, and hundreds of thousands of square feet of new construction and renovation at the National Naval

Bethesda campus will create state-of-the-art institutions poised to continue the highest quality medical training. Base Realignment and Closure mandates reorganizing area military medical training facilities to bring them together in 2011 at Bethesda, already home to the Uniformed Services University of the Health Sciences. The National Institutes of Health will be just across the street. The physical co-location is expected to maintain quality programs consistent or exceeding that presently at Walter Reed and National Naval, and on par with leading institutions such as Johns Hopkins and the Mayo Clinic.

Local graduate medical education leaders have been intimately involved in every aspect of the realignment process from ensuring adequate patient populations for all the training programs, to designing call rooms and resident office areas, to developing plans for a smooth transition over the next five years.

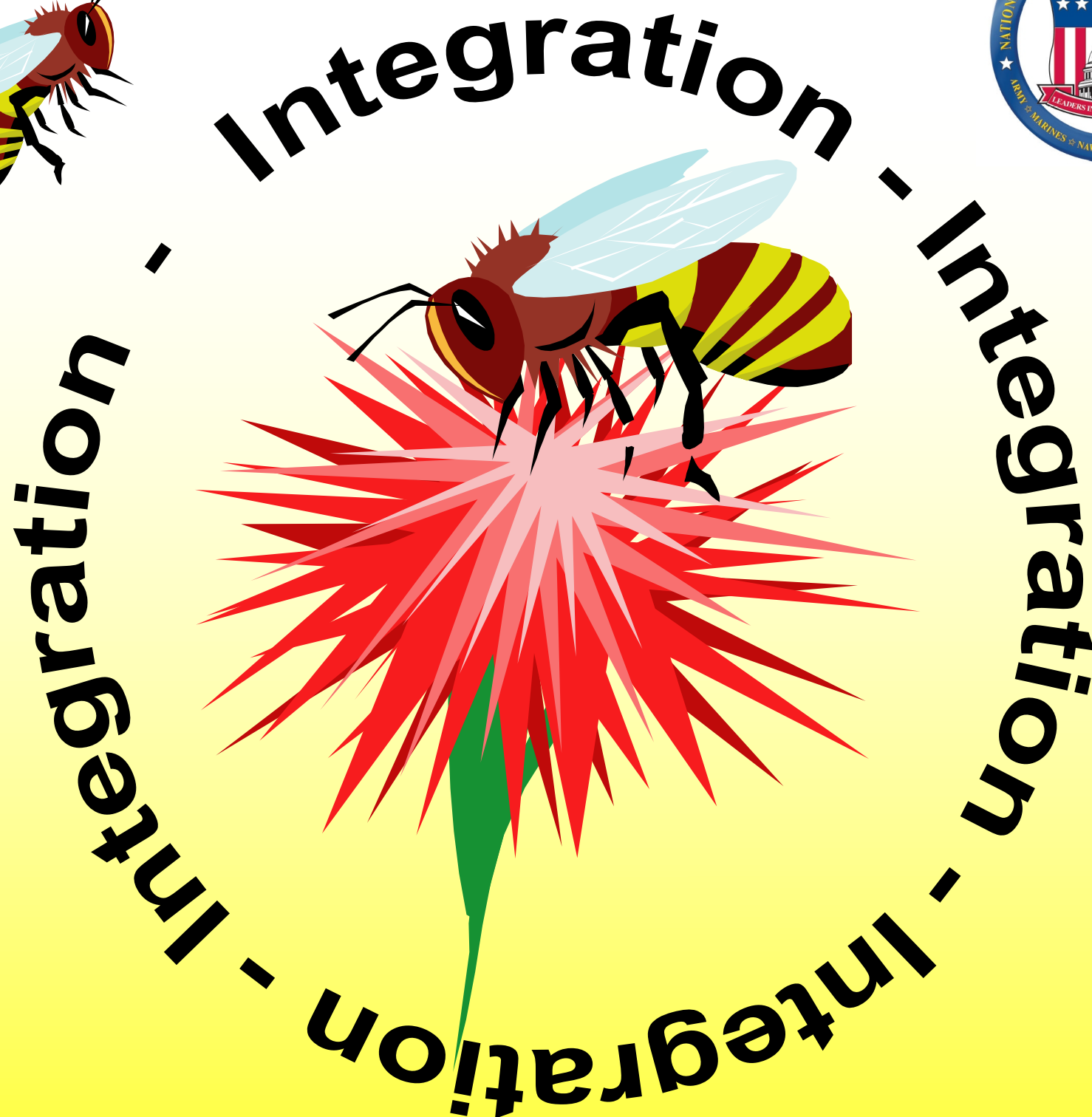
These leaders are developing plans to anticipate the “look” of graduate medical education in 2011 with computer labs, a new simulation center, and increased space for research.

Everyone involved in Medical Education in the Consortium is deeply committed to the outstanding

residencies and fellowships now in place, and excited by opportunities for changes and improvements in facilities and training programs in the upcoming years. Substantial benefits for both staff and resident/fellow physicians are expected. The new Walter Reed National Military Medical Center at

Bethesda, together with the enlarged facility at Fort Belvoir will be worthy heirs to the one-hundred year legacy of excellence in military medical care and medical education in the National Capital Area. Program admission information is available at www.walter-reedmedicine.com.





What's the BUZZ?

Look for it on signs, brochures, flyers, in your local command newspapers and on the PUBLIC Web Site



This site also gives you an opportunity to ask questions or voice your concerns about Integration.